Israel's Stumbling Blocks.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

Protestant Episcopal Society

OF THE

DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

FOR

PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS,

IN

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,

PHILADELPHIA,

ON

Sunday Evening, Jan. 1st, 1860.

BY THE

REV. WM. BACON STEVENS, D.D.,

RECTOR OF THE CHURCH.

Take up the stumbling-blocks out of the way of my people.—ISAIAH.

Truly they forget a main part of the Church's glory, who pray not daily for the conversion of the Jews.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

SERMON.

EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE ROMANS,

XIth chapter, 30th and 31st verses.

For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; 'Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

There is something intensely interesting in the past history and future destiny of the Jews. From whatever point viewed, they become to us a marvel and a study.

If we look at them in their *National* character, they present the most remarkable ethnic phenomenon in the history of the world. For no people have ever been dispersed among other people, without losing their national traits and characteristics; but the Jews, though scattered throughout the habitable globe for eighteen hundred years, still preserve their ethnic identity and peculiarities, and though they mingle with every nation, blend with none.

If we look at them as an *Historical* nation, they present greater points of interest than can be found in the annals of any other country. Their histories go back a thousand years and more beyond the birth-day of the most renowned nations of antiquity, and, what is more, their histories, unlike the fables and myths which hang like clouds around the origin of the Athenians and of the Romans, are clear, true and God-inspired.

If we look at them as a *Prophetical* nation, we see a nation about whom the first prophecy in Eden was uttered, and among whom existed a line of Seers, extending through a period of twelve hundred years, before whose visions were presented, and by whose pens were written, the future destinies of the world.

If we look at them as a *Literary* nation, we find them possessing a written language, history, odes, laws and philosophy at the time that Cadmus was introducing his letters into Greece, and six hundred years before the Wolf-nursling founded Rome; a people whose histories have never been excelled by Herodotus or Livy; whose poetry has never been equaled by the blind old man of Chios, or the Mantuan bard; whose biographies have never been surpassed by Plutarch or Tacitus; whose moralists far outstrip Plato and Seneca; and whose legal writers leave far behind them the theories of Aristotle, in his Nicomachean ethics, or the "de Republica" of Cicero.

If we look at them as a *Religious* nation, we see a people having a knowledge of the one living and true God, and giving Him holy worship, and possessing His holy Word, and enjoying the ministrations of a priesthood which He had instituted, and above all, the symbols of His divine Presence and Sovereignty, when the rest of mankind were sunk in idolatry and superstition; and, not to enlarge on this comparison, if we look at the Jews as the race to which was given the Divine law—to whom were committed the oracles of God—"of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came"—and concerning whom Christ Himself declared "salvation is of the Jews"—then do we place this nation, outcast though it now is, and dispersed though it be, on a higher platform than can be occupied by the wisest, the richest, the greatest of any nations of the earth; centering in itself more wonders, and challenging for itself more study, than is found in, and called out by, all the world beside.

It is of this remarkable nation, which the Apostle terms "Israel," that the text speaks, and it is in behalf of this nation that St. Paul writes to the Christians at Rome to awaken their compassion for them, and to call out efforts for their salvation.

The text contains two propositions: *First*, that the unbelief of the Jews in Christ was the means of the Gentiles obtaining mercy. *Second*, that it is by the mercy of believing Gentiles that the unbelieving Jews shall obtain mercy.

Had not Israel rejected Christ, and cast out His Apostles, it would probably have been a long time before the Gospel

would have been preached out of Palestine. For the labors there would have absorbed nearly all the force of the Church, so that it could spare but little, if any instrumentality for "the regions beyond." But in consequence of the unbelief of the Jews, the efforts of the Apostles were soon turned towards the Gentiles. "It was necessary," say St. Paul and St. Barnabas in their address to the Jews of Antioch, "that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles." Again, at Corinth, when the Jews opposed themselves to St. Paul and blasphemed, he shook his raiment and said unto them, "your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean, from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." And again, at Rome, after he had called the Jews together and reasoned with them, and yet many disbelieved, he turned from them with solemnity and sorrow, and quoting the remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, he added, "Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." This, then, was one way in which the unbelief of the Jew operated to the spiritual advantage of the Gentile.

Their unbelief also redounded to the benefit of the Gentiles by making the Gentiles more ready to receive Christianity. Had the Jews, as a nation, at first believed in Christ, it would have prejudiced the whole plan of salvation to the mind of the Gentile. The Gentile world would have regarded it as but a new phase of the Jewish creed; and as every thing hitherto Jewish in faith and worship, was kept carefully secluded from the populace, and fenced off from the world, by ordinances in which the rest of mankind had no interest; so Christianity would have been looked upon with distrust, became Jewish, and the prejudice and antipathy which the world had against the Jew, would all have been leveled against the new religion.

We find furthermore that many of the Jews who did embrace Christianity, were thoroughly wedded to the Mosaic ritual, and incorporated many Jewish usuages with Christian worship. Now if all the nation had believed, this tendency would have been

increased, because there would have been but little counteracting Gentile influence, and a people who had worshipped under their ritual for twelve hundred years would have aimed to blend the rites of the Mosaic service with the simple ceremonies of the Christian Church, and thus, when the Gospel did reach the Gentiles, it would have been with the corruptions or additions of Judaizing teachers, obscuring the pure light of truth, and "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

For these and other reasons it was, that through the unbelief of the Jew, the Gentiles have obtained mercy. This then being the fact, St. Paul turns upon the Gentiles the argument and says, since then it was "through their unbelief" "you obtained mercy," now that you have the mercy, exercise it in doing away their unbelief, so "that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." It is an argument drawn from our obligations to the Jews, and from our possession of the coveted mercy of God, and enforced by the asserted truths—that "they are beloved for the fathers' sake," and that "God will yet have mercy upon all." The doctrine of the text, therefore, is, that it is the duty of us Gentiles who have received mercy through that salvation which is of the Jews, to show mercy to the Israel of God, by seeking to bring them to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The work, however, is one girt around with difficulties, and full of obstacles. With these we should make ourselves acquainted, as the first steps towards overcoming them. We must know what we have to oppose and conquer, before we can plant aright the enginery of our warfare, or direct our assaults to a successful conquest.

The stumbling-blocks in the way of success are of two kinds: one peculiar to Christianity, one peculiar to the Jews.

Of the stumbling-blocks in the minds of nominal Christians, the *first* which I will mention is, their general prejudice against the Jew. In the works of learned historians, from Bede to Hallam; in the pages of popular novelists, from Cervantes to Sir Walter Scott; in the verses of the most popular poets, from Boccaccio to Southey, the Jew has been drawn as an object of

calumny, satire and scorn; and when Shakespeare would concentrate in one character, subtlety, cunning, covetousness and an over-reaching avarice, he conjures up a Shylock, a Jewish money-lender of Venice, and holds him up to the contempt of the Christian world, as the representative of the Hebrew race—so that the name of Shylock and Jew are almost synonomous on Gentile lips. We have thus been educated to despise the Jews, and so accustomed to see them mentioned with opprobrium that we easily become imbued with the prejudice and act it out in our daily life. But this prejudice is unjust. What is it which has made the Jew a wanderer, a usurer, a trader, an alien in every land, branded and persecuted with fire and sword? It is, as we shall soon see, Christian intolerance! Christian avarice! Christian revenge! Gentile nations have trodden them in the dust, and then reviled them because they have fallen beneath their iron heel.

The *second* stumbling-block in the way is, the apathy of Christians. It is really lamentable to know how little hold the subject of promoting Christianity among the Jews has upon the Church of God. The very persons who are deeply interested in missions to the heathen, here feel but little sympathy; and yet every argument which can urge to foreign missions, comes with additional force when applied to the Jew. If it is right to send missionaries to the heathen who know not God, much more to send the Gospel to the Jews, who do worship Jehovah and acknowledge the scriptures of the Old Testament. If it is right to send missionaries to idolaters, much more to the Jews who have never bowed the knee to wood and stone, but have ever directed their worship to the one living and true God. If it is right to send missionaries to the decayed churches of the East, much more to the older Church of God—His ancient covenant people, "the vine of His own planting." If it is right to send missionaries to Mohammedans, who worship the False Prophet and obey the Koran, much more to the Jews who hold to the true prophets of God, to tell them of Him "of whom Moses in the law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah."

This apathy is allied to a *third* stumbling-block, viz: a misunderstanding of the Biblical aspect of the subject. There is a great lack of Bible knowledge as to the real state of the Jews before God. We see them indeed a dispersed and down-trodden nation, shall we argue thence that God has cast them off? that He has ceased to love them? No. St. Paul declares, "God hath not cast away His people." They are still "beloved for the fathers' sake." Their present position is that of a disobedient and refractory child, lying under a father's displeasure. The child has offended his father, rebelled against him, set at naught his counsels; and the father, grieved and sad, puts the child under the ban of his displeasure, debars him a child's privileges until he repents and comes back to his filial duty. So the Jews, like sinful children, have rebelled against God, and cast out their Messiah; but God has still towards them a Father's love, still yearns over them with a Father's compassion. They are His children still, under the ban of His displeasure for a moment, but soon to be received back to His paternal favor and home. And were we to go to the house of a friend, whose child was under the father's displeasure, should we think it right, just or humane, because the child was in temporary disgrace, to beat and insult it also, to add our ill-treatment to a father's displeasure? So when we see the Jews, these suffering children of God, shall we, because God has for a moment hidden His face from them, revile and abuse them, and add our insults to His punishment? Oh! how greatly do we misunderstand these relations of God and Israel. Were we but to read the Prophecies in connection with the Epistles, we should there find how full of love God was still towards them—that His eye was on them, His heart yearning over them, and that soon with great mercy He would gather them again to His bosom, repentant, believing, Messiah-loving children.

A *fourth* stumbling-block in the minds of Christians in reference to this work is, that they judge of it by the standard of other missionary work. But it is entirely different from all other ministerial work. It has to deal with a different class of people, a different religious faith, and a people, too, not compact

in population and centralized in particular nations or states, but sprinkled about in patches of families, here and there, all over the world. The missionary work to the Jews is unique; it is not a preaching, but a teaching work, not a gathering of congregations, but personal conversations; it is a hand-to-hand contest with prejudices which borrow all their strength from the very Bible which we firmly believe, and with false hopes which root themselves in a misunderstanding of the very prophecies which we equally hold. The work of dismantling the mind of a single Jew of his national and Rabbinical prejudices, often involves more toil, learning and faith, than it requires (humanly speaking,) to convert a whole village of idolators, or to bring back a corrupt church to a pure faith. The very nature of the work forbids the expectation of large and immediate results.

Turning from the stumbling-blocks in the minds of Christians, let us now look at those which exist in the minds of the Jews. These are numerous, but only a few leading and peculiar ones can be mentioned now.

First. Their hereditary hatred of the Gentiles. If you had been from the first dawnings of knowledge, taught to hate a certain class of men; if they had been represented to you, as vile in themselves, in their belief, in their practices, as hostile to your parents and to their faith; if this hatred had been drawn in, not only with your mother's milk, and your father's teaching, but from the sacred books of your worship; and if all the deep religious sentiment of your soul had been shaped and warped by such moulding influences; then would you understand the depth and inveteracy of those prejudices which the Jews have against Christians. For this is their state towards us. They have been educated from infancy to regard Christians as their enemies, and the enemies of their faith. They have looked upon them as having no part in God's covenant mercy, as being outcasts and idolators. This has been taught them by parents and Rabbies, in the house, and in the Synagogue, in their school books and in their Talmuds; and this hatred has been perpetuated from generation to generation for

nearly four thousand years. And when to this hereditary dislike of all the uncircumcised, you add their intense hereditary pride of descent from Abraham, and their pride of nation, as being God's favored people; you can in some measure understand how thoroughly ingrained must be their enmity to the Gentiles, not only to their persons, (of which, in this country, at least we see but little,) but especially to their religion, and to all attempts to bring them to their despised faith.

The *second* stumbling-block, is the oppression and persecution of the Jews by professing Christian nations.

A more melancholy record cannot be found in the volume of history, than that which narrates the fate of this peeled and scattered people. Though the Gospel was first preached to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles, until the Jews had, as a nation, fairly rejected it; yet the Jews, as we learn from the Acts, were ever ready to stir up opposition to the Christians, and incite persecution against them. As the Gentile Christians increased they soon began to avenge their injuries upon the Jews, and finding them immovable in their faith, soon made laws and edicts which placed this unhappy people between the upper and nether mill-stones of oppression.

Every Christian nation in Europe has in turn, persecuted and banished the Jew. The first persecuting law of a Christian Prince, was by Constantine, in A. D. 325, against the Jews. In the fourth century they were banished from Rome, having first had their ears cut off. In the sixth century they were compelled in France, to embrace the dogmas of the Church or leave the kingdom. In the seventh century the same edicts were enacted in Spain. In the eighth and ninth centuries they were made to wear badges of servitude, and denied many privileges. In the tenth century they were driven out of Bohemia. In the eleventh century they were subjected to the merciless persecutions of the Crusaders, the chiefs of that first crusade declaring that before they attacked the Musslemen, they should destroy the nation which crucified the Son of God, and hence there was a general massacre of the Jews in the cities on the banks of the Moselle and the Rhine.

In the twelfth century they were banished from France by Philip Augustus. His successor, St. Louis, twice expelled them, and Charles VI, in A. D. 1394, again banished them from the Empire.

In the thirteenth century under Edward I, all Jews were required to depart from England.

They were proscribed in Spain in the fifteenth century, and the last year of that century was signalized by their banishment from Portugal.

One of the primary reasons for the establishment of the inquisition was to root out what was called "the Jewish leprosy."

To recount the barbarities which the Christian nations of Europe have inflicted on the Jews, would fill volumes, and they should be written with tears, instead of ink, and on sack-cloth, instead of parchment. Every species of annoyance, every diabolical torture, every debasing usage, every epithet of opprobium, every manifestation of hatred and contempt, has been exercised against them; their property was ever regarded as lawful prey; their persons were never secure from ill treatment; their lives were at the mercy of ruthless rulers; everywhere have they been treated by the Christian nations of Europe, with contumely and wrong; laws of the most oppressive kind have been enacted against them; they could not testify against a Christian in the civil courts; they were forced to wear badges designed to mark them with disgrace; they were forbidden to institute suits against Christians in the courts of law; they were made the foot-ball of Kings and Princes, being spurned now hither and thither by the feet of petty despots; they were compelled to reside in certain sections of cities, and locked in at night; no Christian servants or nurse could stay with, or attend them; no inn for travelers could receive or entertain them; they were in truth, what prophecy declared they should be, "a bye-word, and a reproach among all nations." When Christian nations have thus maltreated and abused this ancient people, do we wonder at their prejudices against Christianity.

Thirdly. If Christian *nations* have dealt thus with them, the Christian *Church* has been equally culpable in placing another stumbling-block before them.

The councils of the Church from that of Laodicea, in A. D. 350, through hundreds of years have made canons against them. The festivals and feasts of the Church have been made occasions of assault upon them, and even Bishops, Archbishops and Cardinals, and Popes, have urged the bigoted and the superstitious, to massacre and exterminate this everywhere hated seed of Jacob.

Nor is this exercise of its persecuting power all the obstacle, (great as it is,) which the Church has put in the way of this people's conversion, for *fourthly*, a greater stumbling-block than even this is found in the idolatry and superstition of the Romish Church.

The Jews have been taught by God, Himself, to hate and abjure idols. They have been trained up in the worship of "the one living and true God." For their several aberrations unto idolatry, they have been most sorely punished. Against such worship there stands the second commandment, the warnings of prophecy and the threatenings of the Almighty. From infancy they are trained to hate idols and idol worship, and rather than submit to it, millions have endured cruel tortures, and millions more violent death. Yet what meets the eye of the Jew in nearly every nominal Christian land? Idolatry, Image-worship. The larger part of the Jewish people know nothing of Christianity, but what they see of it as displayed in the Greek and Roman Church.

They have beheld only this corrupt form of our holy religion; they have witnessed the debasing idolatry of these idolatrous churches; they have seen the Virgin Mary elevated above the Lord of Hosts; Jewish apostates, as they would term the Apostles, made to be objects of worship; statues, pictures, altars, shrines, and the miserable tinsel-worship of a meritricious ritual to take the place of simple devotion; and above all, they have seen the crucifix, everywhere kissed and caressed, prayed to and worshipped, and yet the very word by which they designate an idol is that by which they designate the cross, so that the very language of the Apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," is to them equiva-

lent to saying that Christians boast of their idolatry. In France, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Russia, Greece, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Italy, what can the Jew know of a pure Christianity? They see little that does not militate against God's command, shock their religious sense, and caricature our holy religion; they see churches containing what to them are the abominations of the heathen; they see a priesthood bigoted, vicious, covetous, hypocritical and persecuting; they see a religion which exerts no beneficial influence on Society, which only glosses crime and legalizes iniquity, and which teaches its followers to insult them, oppress them and make their lives bitter with bondage. With such follies and superstitions, such mockery of God and deification of man, such intolerance and lust, such iniquitous lives in priests and people, can we be surprised at the feeling of disgust which the Jew has against the Church, when the false and idolatrous Church is the only one with which he is conversant? And when, in this age, such a case can occur as that of the child Mortara, at Bologna—when what is called the Church of Christ, through its priests, can go into the family of a Jew, and snatch from its mother's arms and its parental home a child of love, and force it away among strangers, that it may be brought up in a faith which the parents abhor—when the Pope sanctions such proceedings, and despite remonstrances and appeals that should have melted a heart of stone, persists in keeping the child, what must the Israelite argue concerning a religion which can sanction such proceedings? what but cherish against it bitter hatred? How would you feel towards a religion which taught its followers to take your child?

Fifthly. We find a great stumbling-block in the way of the conversion of the Jews in the evil lives of Christians. "Let us confess with shame," says an English writer, "that in all probability the errors in doctrine and errors in conduct which the Jews have observed among the professors of Christianity, have tended as much as any other thing to prejudice and harden them against the religion of Christ. The influence of their Rabbies and the prejudices of their education close their eyes to every Christian book but one, the book of our profession and

practice, and alas! what an erroneous book has this been, in all ages and among all denominations of professors, not only as exhibited in the Church of Rome but in the reformed Churches also." The Rabbinical Jews, by far the larger part of the nation, attach two ideas particularly to the word Christian: *First*, ungodliness; *Secondly*, idolatry. They suppose that Christians live without God and solely for this world, and with most of the European Jews, (especially when they wish to express the utmost profligacy of life to which one of their nation can debase himself,) they say, "he lives just like a Christian." Thus it is, brethren, that in the Christian nations in which their lives are cast, in the Christian Churches planted around them, in the Christian people among whom they dwell, they see only a distorted, bastard, unchristian Christianity—a Christianity without the spirit of Christ, professors of the faith of Christ without being followers of His precepts. Every example of our blessed Lord being uncopied, every commandment unheeded, and multitudes professing His name but denying His doctrine, and wounding Him "in the house of His friends."

Sixthly. No people on earth have such obstacles to contend with in becoming Christians as the Jews, more particularly those living in foreign lands. Few records are more exciting, than those which tell of the struggles of Jewish converts in coming out from the Synagogue, from the influence of their Rabbies, from the intense family prejudices, from the social surroundings, which, like meshes of iron, hem them in on every side. The very listening by a Jew to Christian teaching is regarded as encouraging blasphemy; the receiving of a Christian Minister into his house is regarded as aiding national rebellion; the taking and reading of the New Testament is esteemed a heinous crime; the entering a Christian Church is equivalent to casting reproach on Judaism; and when the eyes of the poor Israelite begin to be opened, he is met by entreaties, by argument, remonstrance, invective, anger, violence, repulsion, and, if he still persists, stripes and imprisonment often await him. He is cursed, he is turned out of the Synagogue, he is disinherited, he is stripped of his property, he is placed

under a fearful interdict so that no Jew can go near him. His father turns him from his door, his mother, forgetting a mother's love in a mother's faith, reproaches him as a reprobate; brothers and sisters league against him; wherever he turns he meets contumely, reproach, violence, and perhaps death. You have perhaps read the narrative of the conversion of some Jews, and painfully intense as they are, they are but specimens of what takes place in nearly every instance when an Israelite turns to Jesus as his Saviour. Indeed, the narratives are rather under-colored than over-colored. There are a hundred little circumstances which cannot be brought out, there are crowds of tumultuous emotions which cannot be expressed. There is a silent suffering, known only to God, bitterer far than any outspoken grief; and there are secret agonies endured in the privacy of the household or the chamber, which no pen can describe, but which are known by the sympathising heart of Jesus. Oh! it is not the tearing of the flesh with pincers, it is not the breaking of the bones on the wheel, it is not the roasting of the soles of the feet before slow fires, it is not the cold, damp, dark, foodless, fœtid dungeon, it is not these things that are the most cruel tortures. No! These eat only into the body, these only waste and lacerate flesh and blood, these only cripple limbs and maim members; but the rack which breaks up a once symmetrical mind, the pincers which nip and twist and tear away the sensibility of the soul, the fires which burn out the life blood of warm affections, which are found, not in inquisitions, but in families, and which are inflicted not by executioners but by relatives, these are the fearful tortures which have ever met the Jewish converts in their whole course, from the first inception of a Christian idea to the full development of the Christian faith.

I have dwelt thus long on the obstacles in the way of the conversion of the Jews, because few minds think of or appreciate these when they send out their sympathies and efforts in their behalf.

Such being the stumbling-blocks, what warrant have we of success in our present work? The promise of God that the Jews shall obtain mercy through Gentile mercy! The determi-

nations of God with regard to His once chosen people are clear and intelligible. He will "betroth them again unto himself." He will "gather them out of all nations whither they have been scattered." He "will build again their waste places, and repair their former desolations." His language is—"for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee;" and though Zion may say, "the Lord hath forsaken me and my God hath forgotten me," yet what is Israel's Redeemer's reply? "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, she may forget, but I will not forget thee, for this is as the waters of Noah before me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth unto thee, nor rebuke thee; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee." And when St. Paul would meet the question, "hath God then cast away His people?" his immediate answer is, "God hath not cast away His people whom he foreknew; for I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be served, as it is written, 'There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.'" These passages, which overarch the Old Testament and New Testament like a milky-way of shining promises, show God's determination concerning His ancient people.

But these future glories are to result from the working of God's spirit through human agencies. Those special agents in the conversion of the Jews are to be the Gentile Christians. It is, as the Apostle says, that "through *your* mercy they also may obtain mercy." It is only within the last fifty years that any systematic efforts have been made for the promotion of Christianity among the Jews. Since then, God has raised up many friends of Israel, who have banded together for the pur-

pose of making known to them the true Messiah. Notwithstanding the greatness of the obstacles in their way, their labors have resulted in the conversion of hundreds of Jews. They have stirred up in the minds of the Christian public, a greater interest in this long outcast race—made the Church to understand more fully the promises and purposes of God toward them—drawn out their liberality in their behalf; and, on the other hand, their labors have made the Israelites feel that there are those who take an interest in them—the books published have scattered far and wide the true knowledge of the Messiah—the power of the Talmuds and the Rabbies has been weakened, and much of the unshackling of the Jewish mind, from ancient superstition and long established errors, is due to the light which has been shed abroad by the publications of these several societies. In humble imitation of these institutions, a few of the members of our beloved Church have organized here a Mission to this covenant race; and I now proceed to give the reasons why we feel it to be the peculiar duty of our American Church to undertake and further this Christian work.

First. Because the Jews are unbelievers in Christ. The doom of such is recorded in God's Word: "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned"—"Without faith it is impossible to please God"—"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha"—"If ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins." The condition of any people lying under such a curse and condemnation ought to excite our deepest sympathy; but when you remember that this is the very people "to whom were committed the Oracles of God," and through whom we have received them; the very people by whom a knowledge and worship of the true God was preserved, and which has been transmitted to us; the very people "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came;" the very people who crucified the Saviour; the very people whose sons laid the foundations of the Christian Church, and who wrote the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament; then does our obligation to interest ourselves in their behalf rise in greatness and urgency beyond even our ability to express.

Secondly. It is the peculiar duty of the American Protestant Episcopal Church, because we are debtors to the Jews, not only for that salvation which "is of the Jews," but to them also for our Apostolic and Episcopal Church. The twelve foundations on which the Christian Church is built are twelve Jews—Jesus Christ, himself a Jew as concerning the flesh, "being the chief corner stone." We trace our Episcopal lineage "from the Apostolic times." It was these Jewish converts—converts from the Jewish faith to the Christian faith—just such converts as we wish to make, and as are made by the Holy Ghost, now; it was these twelve Jewish converts who settled the polity and regimen of the Church, which we inherit to this day. Our Episcopacy had a Jewish origin, and for whatever we enjoy under the grand eccleciastical polity which is our peculiar heritage, we are debtors to the Jews.

Thirdly. The Protestant Episcopal Church is peculiarly fitted, by reason of its liturgical worship, to make an impression on the Jews. The worship of the Synagogue is eminently liturgical; their form of prayer, consisting of many volumes, cover the entire ground of their worship, and compass every service from the most solemn on the day of Atonement to the simple blessing at the family meal. Each distinct feast and fast has its appropriate form, and extempore prayer is a thing to them unknown. No Jew ventures to open his lips in prayer and thanksgiving except with a prescribed form, and we can find, in many of their phrases and arrangements, the origin of some of the most striking portions of our ritual. The Jewish mind have thus been educated to a liturgy. It is to the Jew a necessary form of worship, and he feels the baldness of every other than liturgical service. But in our ritual, embodying as it does all the Psalms and so much of the Old Testament as well as the new, and analageous in so many of its points to his own form of prayer, he feels comparatively at home, and participates with gladness in a service so in accordance with the instincts of his nature, the habits of his mind and the usage of faith.

The Rev. C. W. H. Pauli, in his Journal, written while residing at Berlin, says: "I had to-day a very interesting meeting with

two learned Polish Jews. They called for the purpose, as they very candidly confessed, to try whether they could not convince me that I was in error respecting Jesus being the true Messiah. Arguments were exchanged, but my Jews appeared to remain unmoved. At last one said, 'There is, at any rate, a fault amongst you, even in case you were in the right that Jesus was the Messiah, you have no public prayers, and when you have them in your churches in this country, it is but a meagre service.' He meant the German service. I told him that this was not the case in all the Churches of Christ, and to convince him, I showed him a copy of our Prayer-book, in Hebrew. After a few moments' reading in it, he jumped up quite frantic, and said, 'This is not only in the holy language, but it is all Psalm and language of the holy prophets!' "

Another missionary, in the same year, thus wrote: "I could have distributed many copies of the New Testament, and also of the Liturgy, for all the Jews who have seen the last were highly delighted with it, and not a little astonished to see that our services so nearly resembled their own. Indeed it is the opinion of many whose judgment is not to be lightly prized, that the fact of our Church possessing such a Liturgy as she does, renders her peculiarly fitted to undertake the blessed cause of bearing the Gospel to the Jew, and should be regarded by her members as pointing, on the part of Providence, to a work which, if faithful to her high trust, she cannot ignore.'

Fourthly. The Americans have this great advantage in approaching the Israelite: they can say that the statute book of these United States has in it no ordinance oppressing the Jew; that its history has no record of persecution of the Jews; and that it is the only nominally Christian nation that is not stained with Jewish blood, crying to God for vengeance. This gives us a great vantage ground. The son of Abram sees in our land a religion divested of all alliance with the State, and with a purer, simpler, holier worship than he meets with any where else. He sees a social equality here which does not put its ban on him and hunt him down as a rapacious Shylock. He sees a freedom here which opens to him and to his children the highest

honors of the bench, the bar, the forum, the Senate, the schools of science, and the chairs of the University. He sees around him scarcely anything which galled him and oppressed him in the land of his fore-fathers. The past, with its dark records written with the gory hand of persecution, is here blotted out; the future opens before him bright visions of peace and plenty, and he realizes here more of the blessings, and fewer of the discomforts of life, than has fallen to the lot of this dispersed nation for more than two thousand years. These advantages point us out as a nation peculiarly fitted to promote Christianity among this people. No other nation on earth has such advantages, and we should regard them as so many talents entrusted to our care, to occupy in their behalf until the set time to favor Zion be fully come.

Lastly. Because love for the Jew secures the Divine blessing. The words uttered thousands of years ago are still in force—"blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee." The Psalmist tell us to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee, peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces." God's promise is, that "he will restore favor unto Zion." What the Apostle declared concerning the Israelites of his day is true now; they are still "beloved for the Father's sake." No people have been more carefully watched over, and preserved from being absorbed among the nations. No people have centred upon themselves so many promises, types and hopes of future greatness. The Father's eye still watches over them—the Father's love still yearns towards them—the Father's hand still protects them—the Father's promises still points to their re-gathering into their own land and their reinstatement into divine favor. Surely then we ought to love the Jews, for God loves them and has been with them more than any other people. They are the old stock upon which we are grafted, and they though now "broken off," shall "also be grafted in again," and with us partake of the life and fatness of the same holy root. It is an interesting fact that every one of the noble army of evangelical men who have stood foremost in the Church of England for their zeal

and piety and success, have been strong advocates for Missions to the Jews.

Brethren, if I have kept you long as listeners to my sermon, it is because I feel deeply on the subject which has brought us together. I have been brought in contact with Israelites in every quarter of the globe. I have seen them and conversed with them in their four most holy cities—Jerusalem, Hebron, Tieberias and Safet. I have been led by the peculiar providence of God, to study with some degree of particularity their books of worship, their sacred writings, their traditions and their anticipations. I have examined with no little care, the records of their past history and the prophecies which point to their future glory, by the light of personal observation of them and their land, on the very theatre where were enacted the wondrous scenes of the past, and where are yet to be displayed the more wondrous scenes of the future. No man can visit Palestine without being deeply touched with the peculiar condition of the Jew. He sees their ancient cities now a desolation; he sees their Holy City now ruled over by the haughty Turk; he sees their temple area now crowned with the Mosque of the False Prophet; he sees the Jews sitting and weeping in the place of wailing; and he beholds the race, that once ruled over that glorious country, in poverty, in squalor, in ignorance, in bigotry—cuffed, kicked, spit upon, trodden on, plucked by the beard, stripped, beaten, owning scarcely a foot of the land of his fathers, and in worse than bondage where the race once ruled in glory. Yet as you stand in Jerusalem, with the Word of God in your hand, and look at the Jew from that stand-point, you find yourself in the moral centre of the world—whither the eyes of all Jews turn, whither the hearts of all Christians flow. The trodden-down land is again to be theirs; the fenced cities are again to swarm with "boys and girls playing in the streets;" the waste fields and valleys and mountains are again to be clothed with living green; Jerusalem, long trodden down of the Gentiles, shall again become a royal city; and the outcast tribes, dispersed to the four winds of heaven, shall again be gathered and be restored to their promised land—"for the mouth

of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah says, "He shall set up an Ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Jeremiah exclaims, "Hear the word of the Lord, O! ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off and say, 'He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock.'" Ezekiel writes, "Thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side and bring them into their own land." Hosea declares, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an image, without an ephod, without a teraphim; afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days." Amos prophesys, "And I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof, and they shall make gardens and eat the fruit of them, and I will plant them upon their land and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land, which I have given thee, saith the Lord thy God." Obediah writes, "But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." Micah declares, "I will gather her that is driven out and her that I have afflicted, and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion, from henceforth even forever." Zephaniah predicts, "Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out. I will gather praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame; at that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you, for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth when I turn back captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord." Zechariah says, "I will strengthen the house of Judah and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them, for I have mercy upon them, and they shall be as though I had not cut them off, for I

am the Lord their God and will hear them. I will hiss for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them; and they shall increase as they have increased, and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, and place shall not be found for them."

These, Brethren, are a few of the golden links in that chain of prophecy which binds the Jew to the Holy Land.

But who can portray the glories of this re-gatherd people, and the blessings consequent on their return to Palestine? Imagination folds its wings before the vast conception, and thought stands mute at the magnificent vista which opens before the eye of faith. With the conversion of the Jews is linked every great hope of the Christian world. With their Christianity is intertwined the redemption of the whole earth; and the glories of the millenial day—second only to the glories of "the perfect day" in heaven—are reserved as the complement, the filling up of a scene, the preliminary act of which is the national conversion of Israel and their restoration to their earthly Canaan.—Thus your efforts are aiding in the accomplishment of the most sublime promises that glisten with their jeweled words in the casket of God's truth. You are co-working with God in the setting up of the noblest kingdom that ever stretched its sceptre over man, and are aiding in preparing the way for the time when there shall be "a new heaven and a new earth—wherein dwelleth righteousness."

"Hail! glorious day, expected long,
When Jew and Greek one prayer shall join—
With eager feet one temple throng—
With grateful praise one CHRIST adore!"